

# ARMENIA SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



July -August, 2006

## The School of Young Researchers and Creators Continues its Activities



The students preparing posters on the topic "The forest and its importance"

In January 2005, students from the "Mkhitar Sebastatsi" Yerevan Educational Complex implemented a project called "Reveal and Teach the Gifted Children," which was approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and partially financed by the state budget.

Under the framework of the "Reveal and Teach the Gifted Children," from June 26-29, the "Mkhitar Sebastaci"

Educational Complex hosted the Second Republican Olympiad, which

involved fourth through ninth grade students from all regions of Armenia and 22 schools from Yerevan. The students formed research groups and discussed a range of topics including "The forest and its importance," "To smoke or not to smoke," "No to garbage," "TV in our life," "HIV/AIDS," "The Caucasus," and "Armenia and Azerbaijan." The children conducted the research in the school's Internet Computer Center and in the newly constructed library. ICC employee David Minasyan and librarian Mary Gabanyan assisted the students in their research as they explored the subjects and created posters to represent what they had learned. The aim of the Olympiad was to foster children's understanding and academic capacities through various tests and competitions. The top students were rewarded for their outstanding performance by participation in camp for the duration of their summer holiday.

On June 27, students in grades four through six presented their works, followed by presentations from seventh through ninth grade students on June 29. Each presentation was accompanied by lively discussion and discourse. This kind of interactive Olympiad was encouraged by specialists in the distance learning school because of the importance placed on

group interaction for students, proven to result in stronger academic achievement. The Olympiad enabled children to cultivate skills in constructive dialogue and conflict resolution.

Many of the parents, teachers, and students had positive things to say about their experience with the program.

“We participate in such an event for the first time. The works and chosen topics were very interesting. We mostly liked the group works. It is of much importance that the organizers listened to each opinion. We worked very independently, thought and expressed our thoughts freely and honestly. During free time we sang and danced. First I was kind of alone, but soon this feeling disappeared and I got many friends, owing to the friendly attitude of the teachers and students.”



A group work during Olympiad

**Lilit and Silva Khachatryans,  
Ani Navasardyan  
City of Yeghegnadzor**

“Frankly speaking in nowadays the unselfish treatment is very rare. This is an exceptional chance for the children to learn to live in a society, to listen and respect each other.”

**Marat Davtyan  
Teacher, Verin Getashen**

Children in the distance school will continue their work in a summer camp that began July 14, in the village of Yenoqavan. Updated news on the project can be found at [www.mskh.am](http://www.mskh.am).

For registration, consultation or cooperation please apply to the project's head office at the following address: 25 A. Babajanyan Ave., South-West B-1 District, “Mkhitar Sebastatsi” Educational Complex, “Republican Distance School of Young Researchers and Creators.”

**Tel: 735330, 732330, 741112**

**E-mail: [info@mskh.am](mailto:info@mskh.am), [heraka@mskh.am](mailto:heraka@mskh.am), [gevorg89@web.am](mailto:gevorg89@web.am)**

## Development of Web-based Armenian Language Resources

Recently, Estera Azroyan, Armenian Language and Literature teacher from Stepanavan School #35, and the school's Internet Computer Center employee Elza Vazradyan, initiated the creation of a web page devoted to the famous Armenian writer Paruyr Sevak. The idea of the web site came to Estera while she was researching Armenian language resources during the computer training sessions organized by Ms. Vazradyan.

Soon the idea became reality. A group of five ninth grade students were chosen to type the text and select pictures for the website. The content embraced a wide range of information about Paruyr Sevak's life. Photo galleries, commentary from famous critics, and different tasks for the students are included and were arranged by ICC employee Ms. Vazradyan to preserve technical accessibility and easy navigation.

"The idea of the resource creation generated taking into account the lack of Armenian language online resources. The website is created not only as a supplementary resource for the literature classes for teachers and students, but also for all admirers of Sevak's poetry. I very much appreciate that Project Harmony gives a chance to create Armenian language resources," commented Estera Azroyan.

"The web page can be considered a success. Of much importance is the 'Tasks' section of the website, where one can find different tasks which can be successfully completed during the classes", admired Greta Chavrushyan, Vice Principal of the school and teacher of Armenian Language and Literature.

The site was launched in May and is now available on the Armenia School Connectivity Program's "Resources" section. (<http://projects.ascp.am/sevak/>). The official opening of website for interested public and community members will be held in September.

## Student Newspaper Launched



Discussion process during the training

Media is increasingly playing a central role in the lives of men and women around the globe. And the necessity for credible media is particularly felt in small communities like Dilijan, where access to multiple media networks is not often available. For this reason, a group of students from Dilijan School #4 have taken the initiative to publish the first school newspaper for the upcoming 2006-2007 school year. The aim of this newspaper is to educate, inform, and inspire a young generation of community activists.

The goal of producing a high-quality newspaper will require well-informed and skilled journalists. Therefore, the Internet Computer Center of Dilijan School #4 organized a training session entitled a “Brief Seminar on Journalism” held on June 24. The training, conducted by Tim Spence, member of Knight International Press organization, targeted young journalists and teachers. In attendance were journalists of the “Young Dilijan” monthly journal, reporters from Dilijan School #4 and #5, journalists from Noyemberyan School #1, and Kristine Kirakosyan, a teacher from Dilijan who will lead the process of producing and publishing the newspaper.



A group photo with Tim Spence at the front

The aim of the training was to provide important skills to the participants, including tips on producing balanced and interesting articles, how to develop ideas, and how to prepare credible articles based on reliable sources and rich information. Through this course, participants were better able to locate dynamic information and conduct online research, as well as interact with members of the community engaged in journalism.



## Summer Fun at Computer Camp



The Computer training at Goris School #3

Engaged students filled the Internet Computer Center of Goris School #3 from July 10-14. The region's top twelve students spent their summer vacation developing skills and acquiring knowledge in the field of IT.

The participating seventh and eighth grade students were selected for the camp on a competitive basis, with the requirement that each should have the capability to obtain web design skills in five days.

The camp, sponsored by the Competitive Armenian Private Sector Project (CAPS) and implemented by the "Community Support Center of Charentsavan" NGO, was held in the Armenian cities of Charentsavan, Sevan, Berd, Sisian, Goris and Kapan.

Peace Corps volunteers Ed Ball, Miles Ulrich, and John Kolb also donated their time and skills to the project, assisting campers to master basic web design alphabets and create their own web pages. Each day was more interesting than the previous one and every day they acquired more information. The most adventurous was the last day of the camp when they uploaded their work on the web site (<http://users.freenet.am/~anna91>). Campers were congratulated for their hard work by visits from Garegin Chukaszryan, Head of Information Technologies Foundation, and Ashot Tserunyan, Head of the NGO Community Support Center of Charentsavan. After active conversation and brainstorming with the guests, the children watched a film about the Armenian Genocide and received certificates for their outstanding achievement.



Practical works

## Partnership Project Targets Grizzly Bears



A group picture with Shawn Umansky

On June 20, 2006, more than a dozen students at Gavar Secondary School #9 came together to showcase their online project about grizzly bears in Montana. The presentation was a celebration of the hard work the students had done throughout the spring 2006 semester. In support of their successful project, Armenia School Connectivity Program (ASCP) staff Karine Gevorgyan and Shawn Umansky had the privilege of being present for the presentation.

Teacher Shushan Badeyan headed the project and worked with her students regularly, assisting them in researching their chosen topic.

Lasting approximately one hour, the presentation looked at the many aspects of grizzly bears, including a description of their habitat, a look at different species of bears, the ecosystem of grizzly bears, and some of the factors that are negatively impacting grizzly bears and their environment. A 54-page booklet supplemented the PowerPoint presentation, during which each student took turns speaking about their individual contribution to the project. Highlighting their English proficiency, several components of the presentation were spoken in English.

As a participant in the Armenia School Connectivity Program (ASCP), Ms. Badeyan was paired up with U.S. teacher Deb Adams in March. Together, they agreed to create parallel projects centered on geography and the environment. Ms. Adams and her students live in the state of Montana, where grizzly bears are prevalent, which is how the topic of grizzly bears arose.



Students making a presentation on Grizzly Bears